

Public Health Information Technology (PHIT) Committee

Charter

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the charter

The Public Health Information Technology (PHIT) committee has been created to provide enterprise-wide business policy guidance, recommendations, issue resolution and coordination to achieve goals that improve services to public health.

Each member will sign the charter to signify their acceptance. The charter will be a living document that will be modified as necessary if the committee determines changes are needed.

1.2 Background

At the Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials (WSALPHO) Executive Public Health Leadership Forum (PHELF) in Olympia on February 16, 2000 the Department Of Health (DOH) gave a presentation on the possibility of redesigning Thurston County's Public Health Issue Management System (PHIMS) and making it available to all Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJ). WSALPHO also expressed a concern that coordination was needed between LHJs and DOH staff considering other automated systems. It was decided that a committee should be formed, chaired by the DOH Chief Technology Information Officer (CTIO), to advise WSALPHO on information technology issues and opportunities to purchase or develop systems that would have potential broad use within LHJs in Washington.

2 Roles of the Committee:

- Provide a vision for the use of Information Technology (IT) in support of public health
- Provide guidance on emerging IT issues that impact public health
- Provide guidance and recommendations on standards
- Become familiar with a range of IT initiatives at the state level and help evaluate effects
- Provide consultation and advice about priorities as DOH pursues initiatives that have effects
- Communicate to colleagues about IT directions under consideration
- Seek assistance in testing IT applications as needed

3 Committee Charge

3.1 Vision

Establish a vision for the use of information technology in support of public health in the State of Washington. This will be done by defining and establishing timelines for expected outcomes and policies. The vision should include public health agencies, as well as public health partners (large labs, hospitals, providers, etc.). Information technology should address emerging technologies, guidance on systems development, establishment of priorities, control of information technology, and use of the Internet as a public information tool.

3.2 Standards

Recommend standards to support business applications such as data sharing, technology both current and emerging, Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance, common data elements and others.

3.3 Efficiencies

Suggest opportunities for improving efficiencies and effectiveness through information exchange, setting priorities, management of changes in IT and costs, coordinating state and local systems, i.e., streamlining data collection and reporting, and training for staff.

3.4 Resources

Leveraging resources by the use of bulk buying power, State-of-the-art technology, and pooling monetary resources and capacities for both state and local agencies.

3.5 Emerging Technology

Make recommendations on emerging technology. This will include items such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) or Global Positioning Systems (GPS) type systems.

4 Meeting schedule

The PHIT committee will meet quarterly during the first month of each quarter on the 4th Wednesday of the month. The meeting will be approximately 6 hours in length. Other business may be transacted via electronic means including email, teleconference, etc.

5 Membership

To provide extensive input the committee needs a diverse group of individuals across multiple disciplines and LHJs. Membership will represent LHJ administrators, Health Officers, Public Health Nursing Directors, Environmental Health Directors, Assessment or Epidemiology support, and information technology.

Member	Organization	Phone	Email
Frank Westrum (Co-Chair)	State Department of Health	(360) 236-3105	frank.westrum@doh.wa.gov
Sherri McDonald (Co-Chair)	Thurston County Public Health Department and Social Services	(360) 786-5581 Ext. 7680	mcdonas@co.thurston.wa.us
Mary Ann Beeson	Grant County Health District	(509) 754-6060 Ext. 543	mbeeson@ep.co.grant.wa.us
Kathy Carson	Public Health – Seattle and King County	(206) 296-4677	Kathy.Carson@metrokc.gov
Melanie Dalton	Bremerton- Kitsap County Health District	(360) 337-5248	daltom@health.co.kitsap.wa.us
Torney Smith	Spokane Regional Health District	(509) 324-1518	tsmith@spokanecounty.org
Greg Stern	Whatcom County Health and Human Services Department	(360) 676-6720	gstern@co.whatcom.wa.us
Greg Story	Chelan-Douglas Health District	(509) 886-6482	story@health-chelan-douglas.wa.gov
Carol Villers	Northeast Tri- County Health District	(509) 684-1301	cville@netri.wa.gov

Member	Organization	Phone	Email
Mark Oberle	University of Washington, School of Public Health & Community Medicine	(206) 616-9394	moberle@u.washington.edu
Julie Alessio	State Department of Health	(360) 236-4326	Julie.Alessio@doh.wa.gov
Joan Brewster	State Department of Health	(360) 236-4062	Joan.Brewster@doh.wa.gov
Marie Flake	State Department of Health	(360) 236-4063	Marie.Flake@doh.wa.gov
John Kobayashi	State Department of Health	(206) 361-2914	John.Kobayashi@doh.wa.gov
Mary Ann O'Garro	Grant County Health District	(509) 754-6060	mogarro@rep.co.grant.wa.us
Greg Smith	State Department of Health	(360) 236-4099	Greg.Smith@doh.wa.gov
Patty Schwenderman		(206) 296-4362	Patty.Schwenderman@metrokc.gov